

FY14 Urban Agriculture Grants, Round 1

City of Somerville \$36,877 – This project will provide another strategy for making healthy food available to the City's underserved urban neighborhoods through construction of a new raised bed and greenhouse structure at an established urban farm (South Street Farm) and installation of new hydroponics growing system at Somerville's Edgerly School. The school greenhouse will support hands on classroom learning and supply locally grown greens to the City's subsidized mobile, farmer's market. Project partners include Groundwork Somerville, Stem Garden Institute, Shape- Up Somerville and the Somerville Public School System.

City of Everett \$5,000 - The grant will assist the City with funding to launch a citywide Urban Agriculture rezoning initiative consisting of three activities: (1) Inventory and assessment of tax – exempt vacant parcels to identify land appropriate for future urban farm sites; (2) development of zoning amendments to legalize commercial agriculture within the city, and (3) community education and outreach to engage Everett residents and other stakeholders in the drafting of the new zoning rules.

The Food Project, Boston, MA \$27,789 - This project is a collaboration of the Food Project and the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative. (DSNI) operates a greenhouse and urban agriculture youth mentoring program in Dudley square. The Food Project operates farms in Beverly, Lincoln, Lynn and a greenhouse in Dorchester that together supply fruits and vegetables to subsidized Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) accessible farmers markets, and hunger relief organizations. Funds will be used to conduct a cost analysis the Food Project's urban and suburban farm tracts, to install an overhead irrigation system at the DSNI greenhouse, to underwrite extension school training for greenhouse staff and student volunteers to help increase tomato yields, and to launch a Dudley neighborhood community food action planning process.

Gardening the Community, Springfield, MA \$15,611 Gardening the Community (GTC) operates an urban agriculture program that teaches local youth about growing food and sustainable organic farming practices on former vacant lots in Mason Square. The neighborhood was nearly destroyed by a tornado in 2011, contains numerous abandoned buildings and lacks a grocery store to serve local residents who suffer from high rates of diabetes and obesity. GTC distributes produce from its farm plots to subsidized neighborhood farm stands, farmers markets and a community accessible farm share program. The group will use the funding for a soil nutrient assessment of two farm plots, to purchase and construct low tunnels and hoop houses, to establish a more visible neighborhood farm stand to sell directly to local residents/restaurants, and for Somali and other language appropriate marketing materials.

Groundwork Lawrence, Inc \$19,053 Groundwork Lawrence (GWL), a community- based environmental non-profit, has partnered with the City to improve public parks, build community gardens, establish and operate farmers markets, and sponsor River restoration and clean-ups - all using the labor of the organization's volunteer high school Green Team. GWL will use the grant to expand its growing space at Costello Park including installation of a 48"long green house and cold frame structure. The greenhouse and related improvements will enable the Green team to cultivate herb and vegetable seedlings for their own use and sale to GWL's 350 member community gardening network and to increase by one third the produce supplied to neighborhood farmer's markets. Proceeds from the seedlings sales will be used to redeem farmers' market veggie prescription coupons for patrons suffering from diet- related diseases.

Mill City Grows, Lowell, MA \$20,000 Mill City Grows (MCG) is an NGO that operates community gardens, and more recently, an urban farm, that grows food distributed through a mobile farmers market (piloted in 2014) serving low and fixed income residents in the city of Lowell. MGC is requesting funding for materials to retrofit a bus as a mobile market truck, for the purchase of IPADs, EBT machines and tracking software to accept WIC and SNAP electronic payments and for the printing of marketing and educational materials. These infrastructure investments will allow implementation of a full service mobile market in June 2014 and increase the availability of affordable, fresh, healthy, local food in neighborhoods remote from grocery stores and Lowell's one stationary farmers market.

Partnership with Tufts University-UFI, Boston, \$30,000 - The Urban Farming Institute (UFI) of Boston provides training to beginning farmers and works with municipal and non-profit partners to identify land suitable for farming. In Boston, UFI is working with the Trust for Public Land (TPL), Dudley Neighborhood, Inc (DNI) and the City of Boston's Department of Neighborhood Development (DND) to convert (3) vacant sites in Dorchester and Roxbury into farmland. UFI in partnership with Tufts University's New Entry Sustainable Farmers Project (New Entry) will use the funding to

develop and implement a model curriculum and field training program for residents of low-income Boston neighborhoods focusing on small plot urban farming. The goal of the program is to recruit and train a new cohort of urban farmers who will have the skills and experience to establish successful farm operations and related agricultural processing businesses. The Kendall Foundation, Citizens Bank, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts and EOS foundations have committed a total of \$130,000 in matching funds.

Regional Environmental Council, Worcester, MA \$10,170 - The Regional Environmental Council (REC) of Worcester operates a mobile farmers' market to improve food security in low-income neighborhoods across the city. REC will use the grant to purchase computer software and hardware that will enable the mobile market to: (1) track and process EBT and SNAP market sales; and, (2) allow Worcester restaurants, grocery stores and other institutional buyers to source from market farm vendors. Harvard Pilgrim, MA Department of Public Health, USDA Farmer's Market Promotion Program and USDA Commodity Food project have together pledged \$467,410 to support the project.

FY15 Urban Agriculture Grants, Round 2

MDAR's second funding round in October 2014 to 11 urban farming projects in cities across the Commonwealth totaled \$400,000 in grants. Urban farming enterprises in cities such as Salem, Roxbury, Holyoke, Lowell and Lawrence are expanding with the support of the state's innovative program, adding to the growing momentum of the state's recently established Urban Agriculture program.

Grant Recipient: Haley House Inc.-Roxbury

Award Amount: \$23,976.00

Project: Hayley House will increase its cultivation and distribution of affordable food to vulnerable communities with the development of the 95 Thorton St. urban agriculture site. Hayley House will expand the use of this site with the installation of a water system as there currently isn't a water source on site.

Grant Recipient: Department of Biology, Salem State University

Award Amount: \$26,966.00

Project: Salem State University will use their grant for the establishment of an Aquaponics Cooperative and Training Initiative. Funds will be used to construct a greenhouse and re-circulating aquaculture system with grow beds for plants. An Aquaponics Cooperative for residents of Salem will be developed and documentation of the process will be disseminated for replication in other communities.

Project: Grant Recipient: Suffolk County Conservation District (SCCD) in association with City Soil & Greenhouse LLC- Boston

Award Amount: \$69,879.00

Project: City Soil and the Suffolk County Conservation District (SCCD) are working to demonstrate an effective composting system that can be replicated and implemented in other cities. If successful, the system could provide affordable, high quality compost for the City's urban farmers. The funding will be used to permit and construct an Aerated Static Pile facility for converting food waste to compost, from which heated carbon dioxide-enriched air is captured and pumped into an adjacent greenhouse.

Grant Recipient: Nuestras Raices- Holyoke

Award Amount: \$18,638.00

Project: To cultivate a variety of culturally-preferred crops for the largely Hispanic community of Holyoke, Nuestras Raices will repurpose an existing structure creating a commercial greenhouse for the production of seedlings of several cultural crops for area farmers and community growers. They will also use the grant to procure clean seed stock for the "starts" needed for the growing season. Training will be provided to local youth on all stages of greenhouse practices and production as well as assistance for community growers.

Grant Recipient: City of Somerville

Award Amount: \$36,950.00

Project: The City of Somerville will expand their "Local Food Production/Distribution Triangle" with the creation of a

network that will include 10 micro-farms and 5 additional subsidized markets for distribution. The project includes the purchase of a van and continued training for local youth to assist in the distribution of the harvested food. The project will pilot a Chef's market to develop a scalable revenue stream from the sales of Somerville-grown produce. Project partners include Groundwork Somerville and Shape-Up Somerville.

Grant Recipient: Gardening the Community(GTC) - Springfield

Award Amount: \$36,500.00

Project: Gardening the Community will complete the initial stages of development to a recently acquired parcel of land (2/3 acre) for an additional farming site and training center. The funds will be used to devise and implement a soil regeneration plan and new infrastructure for water access, rain water harvesting and irrigation.

Grant Recipient: The Food Project (TFP), Boston

Award Amount: 29,059.80

Project: The Food Project will increase production by extending the growing season on their Boston urban farm with row covers, hoops and newly constructed low tunnels. TFP will increase production and introduce no-till cultivation to their urban farm in Lynn, boosting the sustainable practices that will decrease soil amendments, water usage and staff time. Boston Farms manager will take a refresher course in GAP and develop a tracking system to collect data on planting, harvesting, processing and distribution.

Project: Grant Recipient: Groundwork Lawrence, Inc, - Lawrence

Award Amount: \$23,976.00

Project: Groundwork Lawrence (GWL) will construct a 48" high tunnel to their Costello Urban Farm site, enabling the Green Team to begin their growing season 3 months early, adding volume to their crop yield and the ability to grow their own starter plants. The seedlings will be made available for sale to GWL's 350 member community gardening network and increase the produce supplied to neighborhood farmers' markets. GTC will increase the availability and affordability of their fresh produce to the 3 USDA mapped food deserts in Lawrence.

Grant Recipient: Urban Farming Institute (UFI) - Boston

Award Amount: 32,400.00

Project: UFI will purchase a van to increase the efficiencies with the production and distribution of produce from their 5 urban agriculture sites. The award will also be used to upgrade existing food prep areas and provide the supplies and tools for marketing, crop documentation and farmers' market tracking

Grant Recipient: Mill City Grows - Lowell

Award Amount: 27,750.00

Project: Mill City Grows will expand their production capacity with the creation and implementation of a year-round food production model and create educational opportunities at each of their Urban Farm locations for community members, with intensive, year-round food production skills and food justice concepts. The project will expand Lowell residents' access to locally grown food, particularly to those who do not have access to fresh, local food.